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# Why Men Degenerate:

A

# POPULAR LECTURE

DELIVERED ON

THANKSGIVING DAY, NOVEMBER 25th, 1875,

BY

## DR. JORDAN,

PROPRIETOR OF THE

## New York Museum of Anatomy,

No. 618 BROADWAY,

Between Houston and Bleecker Streets,

AT THAT INSTITUTION.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

NEW YORK:
ART PRINTING ESTABLISHMENT, 30 BOND STREET.
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ABSTRACT OF

# A LECTURE

DELIVERED AT THE

NEW YORK MUSEUM OF ANATOMY, ON THANKSGIVING DAY, NOV. 25th, 1875.

By H. J. JORDAN, M. D.

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GENTLEMEN: In every language, ancient and modern, with which we have any acquaintance, is contained a popular and oft repeated question of almost universal application, the translation of which is, "Of what utility," or "Of what use" is this or that object, enterprise, or entertainment, in which I am invited or solicited to interest myself?

And more especially in a community like this, so eminently utilitarian in its ideas, I doubt that there is one among your number who, on entering this Museum, has not asked himself the same question.

With a view of satisfactorily answering this query, as well as of giving you a few items of practical, useful advice, has the notice of a special lecture on this occasion been issued.

Many years since, the conviction of the fact that by far the greater proportion of the ills to which human flesh is heir, is the result of mere ignorance and neglect, and fired, as I trust by not an unworthy ambition to benefit our fellow-beings, the result finally culminated, twenty-five years ago, in the establishment of this institution, the object of which is strictly *educational*, in the following senses of the term:

1st. As affording to the medical student, and even to the practicing physician, greater facilities for the study of the various branches of Com-

parative Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology, Natural History, etc., than can be afforded in the more limited Museums of Medical Colleges.

Aside from the many published, though unsolicited opinions of the Press in this and other cities and towns, the very liberal patronage and many endorsements of that portion of the medical faculty, of the highest standing in the professional community, should at once be deemed sufficient to vouch for the legitimate and scientific character of our institution.

In hundreds of instances, medical students, advised and instructed by their tutors, have spent an entire day here, bringing with them that which would satisfy the cravings of the physical system, with their note books to satisfy the more worthy appetite of the brain. In a majority of cases, (permit me to add,) the student has been induced to repeat his visit, and sometimes for many days in succession, for the purpose of more thorough instruction in the various branches illustrated here.

2d. Another motive which led to the establishment of this institution was that of popular education, or the instruction of the public at large in the branches already named, from which class of community such instruction had hitherto been improperly withheld. The requisite facilities had never before been provided for the popular study of any of these sciences, except in those institutions where the student must enter for a protracted course of instruction, and in a majority of instances this was of course impracticable.

But here, at a price within the reach of any one, and without interfering with time devoted to other and regular daily pursuits, the student of an hour may come and learn, to a creditable degree, the true meaning of the great ancient precept, "know thyself," and depart a wiser and a better man. By acquiring this self-knowledge we learn to reason from effect to cause, and in cases of many of the diseases to which we are daily subject, are enabled to trace them back to their origin and thereby in future avoid the latter.

3d. As a school of morals; showing in silent, but most unmistakable language, that "the wages of sin is death," and that "the sins of the fathers shall be visited upon the children," etc., our Pathological department has at least no superior.

The many encomiums from members of the clergy of various sects, since the beginning of our philanthropic enterprise, have given us great encouragement, and stimulated to additional and still more active exertions in behalf of our race.

In the branches of Comparative Anatomy and Natural History, we believe that learning "to look through nature up to nature's God" will convey a sermon in itself, which a visitor of a reflecting mind will never forget.

In fine, the success of our institution has been so great, largely increasing from the day of its first establishment, that many, purporting to be similar ones, have been established throughout the country, but the purposes of most of which, I am sorry to say, are exceedingly questionable. In many cases their models are grossly incorrect according to nature, and are therefore likely to lead to great errors on the part of the visitor. In justice, we beg of the public not to be confounded with such. There are no branches of the New York Museum of Anatomy, and *there is but one office for consultation with patients.* I mention this because I have known of instances in which my own name has been used, but with the change of a single letter, and in such a manner as intentionally to mislead the public, and thus garner up the fruits of my own reputation which I had been so many years in acquiring.

In this one office, No. 40 Bond street, a few doors from Broadway, among other special diseases requiring the strictest and most careful treatment, particular attention will be paid to the following, the more so, as they are the ones most liable to fall into the hands of the ignorant and unskillful practitioner, and the improper treatment of which would be the most likely to produce serious if not fatal results.

I. *Various conditions of the system resulting from early bad habits, and neglect of proper teachings on the part of parents and guardians.*

These conditions consist in part of *spermatorrhœa, seminal weakness, emissions, impotence, nervous debility, premature old age, or decay of the various faculties of the mind and body, etc.*

We meet thousands in our daily walks whose ages are only between 25 and 40 years, the proper period of life to enjoy the full vigor of mind and body, but whose tottering limbs, procumbent spine, and unretentive memory, would proclaim each a man of at least forescore.

In a majority of cases these early bad habits are at the foundation of these seeming libels upon nature and her laws. But they are not libels; nature is true to her own laws, and it is only when these laws are violated that we witness what are improperly called unnatural results.

Let us visit any of the insane asylums of this or any other State, pass through the corridors, look into the cells or about the grounds—the greater class of the inmates you will observe to belong to that passive type which manifest no symptoms of violence or raving, no activity of mind or body, no taste for exercise, and none for literary pursuits, (however well educated,) taking little or no notice of what is passing before them, sometimes not even knowing the faces of their most intimate friends or nearest relatives, in fact not living but only decaying and sinking down and down into that sepulchre which they have hewn out for

themselves. These, with few exceptions, are the victims of these same pernicious habits and comprise fully fifty per cent. of the insane of the community of the present age.

Among these are students of schools, academies, colleges, and even of theological institutions; practicing members of all the learned professions, though, as a natural consequence, the physician is the least frequent, knowing, as he does, from comparatively early instruction in his peculiar profession, the physical and mental consequences of these habits.

In the matter of statistics, we may add, that the per centage of the number of inmates of insane asylums, resulting from an abuse of alcoholic drinks, is only from twenty-five to thirty per cent., or from one-half to three-fifths of the former.

Again: We find in the schools for the training and instruction of idiots, a new educational department established but a few years since, originally through the efforts of the celebrated Dr. Samuel G. Howe, a great majority of the inmates, according to the official reports endorsed by Dr. Howe himself, to be either the victims of this habit contracted in childhood, through the example and instruction of nurses and older associates, or else the offspring of parents who had, in former years, practiced these vile and sinful habits.

Still again: Among the records and statistics of deformities, monstrosities, still-births, miscarriages, etc., we are informed, and from our own experience and observation, led to believe, that the leading causes of these misfortunes are the practice, on the part of parents, of these unnatural, and in most cases, criminal habits.

In comparing notes with others of the medical faculty, I am also justified in making the assertion that at least four-fifths of the cases of impotence and sterility with which we are daily familiar, are the direct or indirect results of this habit.

Paralysis of the limbs, emunctory organs, and indeed of all parts and functions of the system, more frequently arise from this than from any other three causes.

Many other diseases, or symptoms of disease, which we have not now time to mention, are the sure effects of this unnatural and criminal practice.

Unlike most crimes, vices, and bad habits, this one is not prevalent among the low and the vulgar; among those who eat the bread of poverty, and are deprived of the light of science and the blessings of the gospel; for there, other vices take their place, the results of which I need not name.

On the other hand, it is among those who are better educated, more tenderly reared, intellectually and religiously, as we have already remarked;

among the purer and more refined classes of juvenile society, that this misfortune is most prevalent.

Many proprietary medicines have been advertised and thrust before the public, purporting to be specific cures for the effects of diseases resulting from this habit, but none of these are reliable, inasmuch as every case demands a thorough investigation according to the temperament of the patient and the circumstances surrounding it.

In conclusion of this part of the subject, it is important to state, that those who follow these practices, and are suffering from other and general or local diseases, of whatever nature, are much longer in recovering under the same treatment than are those who were previously in the full vigor of health and who had never previously destroyed or impaired their vital and recuperative powers by this depletive habit.

Such diseases as small pox, scarlet and typhoid fevers, etc., would more likely prove fatal to the former class, since those remedies used in restoring the patient to strength after convalescence have less foundation to build upon than in the latter class.

Recovering from wounds, contusions, and other local accidents, depend to a great degree upon the purity and richness of the blood; and here too our unfortunate victim has deprived himself of the advantage which nature, not interfered with, would have given him.

Consumption, not only when the direct effect of this habit, but when the patient is predisposed to it, or it is induced by other causes, often becomes incurable, even from its incipient stages, mainly from the continuation of this aggravating element.

II. *Syphilitic diseases* in their various forms and stages have been too frequently tampered with by the ignorant and unprincipled practitioner, the effects of which mistakes are often seen to a very frightful extent in the syphilitic wards of the various hospitals of this and other countries.

Added to this are the many instances of sheer neglect on the part of the patient to seek any remedy or medical aid at all, until the complaint has advanced to an extreme condition, and the consequence is almost invariably most serious if not dangerous or even fatal.

It is moreover frequently asserted, and the sufferer is sometimes made to believe, that secondary and tertiary forms and symptoms of syphilis, together with scrofula, its legitimate heir, are wholly incurable, even by the most skilled professional treatment. This, however, is a gross mistake; a thorough knowledge of the nature of syphilitic virus, and the condition of the physical system when under its influence, will, in most instances, enable the physician, when called in time, to successfully cope with its various formidable features and phases.

Sarsaparilla compounds and other preparations, so often advertised as specifics for the cure of scrofula and other diseases and impurities of the blood are for the most part unreliable, inasmuch as they are generally compounded and sold by unprofessional persons, and though they may be possibly good in some instances, cannot at all times be equal or alike in their effects upon different individuals and under all circumstances.

III. *Albuminuria and Bright's Disease of Kidney.* These two names, though generally associated together, are nevertheless not in all respects synonymous. *Albuminuria* is a hybrid term, or one made up of two words of different languages; one from the Latin *albumen*, an immediate principle of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, which constitutes the chief part of white of egg; and the other, from a Greek word, signifying *urine*. The compound word *albuminuria*, (not "albuminaria" as it is often called by physicians and others,) therefore means a condition of the urine in which it contains an abnormal proportion of albumen, which should be retained in the system and pass into the circulation, thus enriching the blood, or supplying its waste arising from what is called "destructive assimilation."

This, from time immemorial, had been called "kidney complaint," in common with all other affections of a like general nature: but it was not until 1827 that RICHARD BRIGHT, of London, first made anatomical and microscopical research, and thus determined the true anatomical character of the disease in all its various forms, acute, chronic, etc. By these investigations, the several changes in the structure of the kidneys, though by no means uniform, were found in cases of albuminuria mainly to consist of granulations in their cortical or external portions, thereby obstructing the ducts or convoluted tubes, giving rise to the secretion of urine, which contains albumen, as already mentioned, besides producing other abnormal results, which we have not now time to detail.

This disease has become prevalent to a fearful extent within the past few years, principally from the changes in the general habits of society and the greater amount of care and anxiety of business men since the times of our comparatively unpretending ancestors, and when thoroughly seated it is, to say the least, very difficult of permanent cure. But when taken in its incipient stages, notwithstanding former opinions as to its incurable nature, it may, by careful and proper treatment, and aided by due care on the part of the patient, be arrested and eventually cured.

During the past twenty-five years, in behalf of my own patients and those of many other physicians, I have made several hundreds of microscopical and chemical examinations of urine suspected of containing an excess of albumen, and my experience in this branch, as well as in the

treatment of the disease itself, gives me the right to speak somewhat confidently of my abilities in this respect.

Without entering into the minutiæ of chemical analysis in this lecture, the following example, copied from one of my late reports of an examination of the blood in a confirmed case of albuminuria, will show you why the system of the patient becomes so debilitated, even when he has enjoyed comparative immunity from pain. The composition of the blood in perfect health is stated as follows:

In each 1,000 parts are contained, fibrine, 3; blood globules, or globulin, 127; albumen, 72; various salts of sodium, potassium, lime, magnesia, and iron, with the coloring matter, 8; and of water, 790.

In this particular case, the amount of fibrine was unaltered; but there was found of globulin only 85; albumen, 60; salts and *hematin*, or coloring matter, 7; and water, 845; thus making a decrease of 12 parts of albumen, 42 of globulin, (which is of the same nourishing nature,) and of salts 1; or in all 55 parts of vital matter abstracted from the blood and passing off with the urine.

Without giving an abstract of the analysis of the urine in any particular case, we see from the above that any undue excess of albumen passing into the urine must impoverish the blood to a corresponding degree.

Many generations ago, long before the time in which Shakespeare wrote, it was customary for invalids to send their urine to the physician for examination, and the answers returned by the latter were no doubt sometimes as ludicrous as they were indefinite. Thus, in Shakespeare's play of the second part of King Henry IV., act 1, scene 2, Falstaff says: "Sirrah, you giant, what says the doctor to my water?" To which the Page answers: "He said, sir, the water itself was a good healthy water; but, for the party that owed it, he might have more diseases than he knew for."

"*Uromantia*," as it was then called, or "the art of divining diseases by simple inspection of the urine," was not then conducted on scientific or chemical principles, and the reports and results should by no means be confounded with the comparatively perfect investigations of the present day.

Specimens of urine sent to physicians for examination should be recent as possible, voided immediately after rising in the morning, and kept in a well-corked viol.

IV. *Gonorrhœa.* The disease known by this common name is in fact improperly so called, as the name implies a flux or flow of the seminal fluid, while it is only an inflammatory discharge of mucus from the urethra, and may be excited spontaneously or by irritants applied directly

to the membrane; but it is usually produced by impure connexion. It is, however, usually divided into two great varieties: *pura*, or that which does not follow impure connexion, and is not contagious; and *impura*, or that which results from impure commerce, and is malignant or contagious. It is our province here only to give a few general hints upon this subject, simply as a guide to those who would wish to avoid some of the more serious mistakes into which the unwary invalid is most apt to fall.

Copaiva is too often taken in impure doses, and frequently without the advice of the physician, and in very many instances in which its use is directly contra-indicated. Among the latter, and where copaiva should never be employed in doses of any quantity whatever, are, a predisposition to eruptions of the skin, often depending more or less upon a disordered state of the stomach, cases of chronic dyspepsia, or indigestion, etc., as these symptoms are apt to be aggravated by the use of copaiva, or remedies of a similar nature. In large doses it is also apt to produce diarrhœa, when it should be discontinued, or at least the quantity diminished.

The free use of oil, or as it is generally called, the spirit of turpentine, is a favorite form of self-treatment by many who attempt to become their own physicians; but its general action, like many other volatile oils, is that of an irritant poison. Besides this, its effect is to weaken the kidneys, and for this reason alone should be avoided. Indeed, so powerful a specific action has it upon these emunctory organs that workmen in turpentine manufactories, even by handling and inhaling its vapor, are generally so powerfully affected that they either die or are compelled to change their occupation within an average of five years. We believe this statement to be reliable, coming as it does from an extensive manufacturer of the article during the past thirty-five years, who, however, generally attends only to the business of his counting-room without spending much of his time in the laboratory.

In the words of a well-known author, "injections are rarely required," but should they ever be, the patient should never trust to his own unaided judgment in prescribing them.

In perhaps a majority of cases, though by no means in all, the sufferer from gonorrhœa and its kindred diseases is not properly restricted by his physician as to the food, drinks, exercise, etc., which are properly indicated in the special treatment of his case; but too often he is left to his own judgment or his appetite to guide him.

Thus, if the patient has been in the daily habit of indulging in alcoholic beverages, he is not sufficiently cautioned against a continuance of their use; or perhaps he is permitted still to use them in a comparatively

mild form, such as ale or beer, when in fact in many cases a moderate indulgence in some kinds of distilled liquors would be even less injurious than fermented drinks.

As a general rule the diet should be somewhat light, and very gross and fatty meats should be avoided; but these may be idiosyncracies in which a full, generous diet may be absolutely necessary to sustain the strength of the system and thereby prevent a decline.

The remarks on the subject of using liquors are almost equally applicable to the use of tobacco, as the latter very often interferes with the action of medicine, while both patient and physician wonder why such remedies seem to be wanting in their legitimate operation.

Sudden changes of temperature, or those by which colds and other inflammatory diseases are contracted, should be carefully avoided, and exercise of a violent or extremely laborious nature should be suspended for a time, or until the condition of the system will permit the patient to resume his calling with impunity. All violent mental emotions, as anger, hilarity, fear, or passion of any nature, tend to protract the duration of such diseases, and therefor the mind, as well as the body, should be kept in as tranquil a state as possible, for the influence of the mind over matter is sometimes very great, and may frequently produce unlookedfor results.

It should be borne in mind that there are two stages of gonorrhœa; the first, that of *active* inflammation, in which any cause calculated to quicken the circulation or raise the temperature of the blood, only tends to increase the feverish state of the system, and consequently excite the already too excited parts. The second is the passive stage, in which the discharge is due to weakness or want of tone in the organs, and remedies which are demanded in the one stage are absolutely injurious in the other.

*Phymosis* and *Paraphymosis* respectively consist of a preternatural narrowness of the prepuce, so that it cannot be carried behind the *corona glandis*, or if by any means this has been effected it cannot again be brought forward, producing what is called "strangulation." This is sometimes congenital and not superinduced by disease, in which cases circumcision should be resorted to. In others it is the result of inflammation and swelling, brought on by syphilis or gonorrhœa, and should be reduced by such local applications as may be ordered by the physician.

Depending upon phymosis, retention of urine or *ischuria phymosica* frequently occurs, on which point the physician should be consulted at once, as delays are dangerous.

A neglect of the treatment of gonorrhœa, or what is sometimes worse, improper treatment, sometimes results in swelled testicle, or *hernia hu-*

*moralis*, a painful symptom, and one which if too long neglected often becomes chronic, and consequently difficult or impossible of complete cure.

*Varix*, or *varicose veins*, are the result of local retardation of the venous circulation; the symptoms are most common in the superficial veins of the lower limbs, especially of those who have been much addicted to amorous indulgencies, and of females who are about to become mothers. Sometimes the vein becomes ruptured, giving rise to internal hemorrhage.

When *varix* affects the veins of the scrotum and spermatic cord it is called *varicocele*, and in the latter is more common on the left side than on the right, for which reason medical authors have hitherto failed to give a satisfactory explanation.

*Hydrocele* is a frequent concomitant or sequent of some one of the already named violations of natural laws, and is generally applied to a collection of serous fluid in the areolar or cellular tissue, or in some of the coverings, either of the testicle or of the spermatic cord. The first of these is called *external hydrocele*, that of the envelope of the testicle *hydrocele* of the *tunicæ vaginalis;* to which is prefixed the term *congenital* when there is a free communication between the membrane in which it is situated and the cavity of the abdomen. Existing in the spermatic cord it is called *encysted*, or *diffused hydrocele of the spermatic cord*, as the case may be.

Tapping or puncturing with a trocar is only done for temporary relief, and not for permanent cure, as the fluid collects again after the puncture is healed, and this operation is therefore only to be termed *palliative*. When, however, a liquid of an irritating nature is injected, like aromatic wine, the coat becomes inflamed, adhesion takes place, and the cavity is obliterated.

As the manipulation of instruments employed for this purpose can be successfully made only by a skillful surgeon, it is therefore of the highest importance that only such be applied to, as an ignorant or careless practitioner might be very apt to puncture the testicle, thus producing inflammation of a painful and dangerous character.

It is usually in the form of a soft, unequal, knotty, compressible, and indolent tumor, situated in the course of the cord, and increasing upwards from below. It is less in size when the individual is in the recumbent posture, increasing when he stands erect.

It is highly important to the patient who is attacked with even the first symptoms of varicocele to apply at once to a competent physician, before the disease has passed from its incipient to its chronic stage. There may be no pain and no sensible feeling of weakness or physical debility in the parts, and the approaching ailment may be recognized only by the en-

gorgement and swelling of the veins at the surface of the scrotum. When the disease has further progressed, the testicles often begin to waste away, the veins continue to become enlarged, until in the end the victim becomes hopelessly and incurably impotent, when, had the proper treatment been resorted to in time, strength and vigor might have been perfectly restored. It is unfortunate that so few persons, except those of the medical profession, attach the degree of importance to this form of disease which it really demands; and indeed it is only within the last few years that medical examiners have seen fit to reject candidates for the army, for police duty, and for life insurance, on this account. The symptoms already described may be considered as a warning of approaching impotence, which latter misfortune is, to use the language of a celebrated medical author, "the not unfrequent source of great domestic infelicity." It is the sacred duty of every man to retain his sexual vigor to a ripe old age, and unless he has committed unnatural excesses during his early years, there is no reason why he should not retain this faculty as long as others. So-called "incompatibility of temper," resulting in frequent divorces, is often only another name for impotence, and both scripture and legislation regard the ability to perform marital rites as incumbent upon man. It is only two or three years since the young and beautiful wife of a distinguished member of the United States Congress obtained a divorce solely upon this issue.

Again we repeat, that too much importance cannot be attached to competent and reliable medical treatment, on appearance of the very first shadow of the symptoms which lead to this calamity. After varicose veins and confirmed varicocele, follow atrophy or wasting away of the testicles, but when attended to in proper time the latter malady, with all its concomitant misfortunes, may be arrested.

Even when the trouble has not culminated in absolute impotence, the fruits of alliance with those suffering from the premonitory symptoms are apt to be sickly, wan and short-lived, and we hold it to be a gross sin against the Maker of Mankind to be the means of begetting or bringing forth such beings.

But we trust that with increasing light and knowledge on the part of the community, this with many other crying evils of a similar nature, may in time grow to be among the things that were.

In bad cases the vein is sometimes tied, but except great care is observed, this method is in danger of leading to *phlebitis*, or inflammation of the veins, and sometimes terminating in suppuration, ulceration, or gangrene.

It is frequently thought by the non-professional individual that *bubo*,

or an inflammatory tumor, seated in the groin, must of necessity have its origin in some syphilitic disease, or disposition of the system.

But this is a decided mistake; authors of the present day classify the affection into three parts, viz.: *simple*, or *sympathetic bubo; venereal bubo;* and *pestilential bubo.*

The first is independent of any virus in the economy, and may occur through sympathy with severe and painful corns, standing for a long time with wet feet, and from any one of at least half a dozen causes.

The second is occasioned by the venereal virus, and the third is symptomatic of the plague. The last two, from their formidable character, are sometimes called *malignant bubo.*

Either of these three types may often, when taken in time, and by what is called the abortive treatment, be dispersed and suppuration avoided; but when too far advanced, they must of course be suffered to run their full time, and be dealt with accordingly. Hence, upon the first appearance of inflammation and swelling in these parts, we may see how very important is a prompt application to the competent medical adviser.

To the second stage belong gleet, etc., which, although unattended with pain for the most part, are when neglected for a considerable time, debilitating to the patient, and productive of results as formidable as those which are more keenly realized by their victim, and especially by him who is untutored in such matters.

The uro-genital organs are scarcely less delicate than the eye, and any derangement in their condition or functions require treatment as skilled as do diseases of the latter.

No unprofessional man would dare to undertake the medical and surgical treatment of himself, were he threatened with loss of his sight, and yet thousands of unthinking and uneducated persons imagine that they can at all times save the physician's fee by self-treatment in diseases of a private nature. And the more ignorant are they of pathology, the more ready are they to assume unlimited knowledge thereof, with what results are witnessed by the many living pathological specimens whom we daily meet, but who seem to ignore the fact that they are fast sinking down into those sepulchres which they themselves have hewn out.

These remarks do not apply to diseases mentioned in this lecture alone, but to all those which I have named, and to a great part of those represented in the Pathological Department of this institution. Let it not be for a moment supposed that in this brief lecture I have exhausted the subject of private diseases, or even a catalogue of the various symptoms arising from them. Volumes might be written upon the former, and of the latter, with all their varieties and complications, "their name

is legion." I have only touched lightly upon those ideas which are most readily suggestive in taking in, as it were, a bird's-eye view of the whole, and leaving more minute details for a series or regular course of lectures.

And in these, as well, or perhaps better than in complaints of other characters, it is proper to caution the unwary patient against those who claim that they only sell or administer vegetable medicines, and that therefore they must be harmless. The most virulent poisons known are among those of purely vegetable origin, as may be proved by reference to any reliable chemist or toxicologist. For example, *aconitia*, which is extracted from the vegetable *aconite*, or *monkshood*, is known to have produced death in doses of only one-fiftieth of a grain, while one-fifth of a grain of *arsenic* is the usual dose in the treatment of various diseases.

As a community, we are too apt to be led astray by attractive advertisements, but in medicines especially should we be cautious, as their abuse involves health and even life.

*Hemorrhoids* or *Piles* are well known to result from habitual constipation, a sedentary life, various irregular habits in eating, drinking, exercise, sleep, etc., and very frequently from the habits and vices which we have already named.

The different methods resorted to for the purpose of a cure are quite as various as the causes, and many of them are perfectly inefficacious and even absolutely pernicious. A proper diagnosis and careful, judicious treatment are in all cases indispensable. Patients suffering from this annoying and often painful disease should studiously avoid what are denominated "specifics," or remedies which are warranted to cure in every case, whatever may be the symptoms or cause. Strict attention to diet and habits is quite as essential in most cases as is the quality of the remedies administered. "Catarrh Specifics," in the form of *sternutatories*, or pungent, irritating snuffs, although sometimes affording temporary relief, only tend to increase the annoying symptoms and aggravate the disease, and should therefore be looked upon with suspicion. From long observation, and by comparing notes with others of the profession, I am led to the belief that this disease is in many cases aggravated by habits of masturbation, excessive venery, and other infringements upon the laws of nature and health.

A powder has recently made its appearance among us under the name of "*Alpina*," an East India root, which is represented as a radical cure for catarrh. It is simply the pulverized root of the well-known galangal plant, and although in many cases useful as a medicine, it has no virtues whatever in this disease.

V. *Rheumatism* and *Neuralgia* not unfrequently result from venereal

diseases and improper treatment therefor. Mercurialization, or salivation with mercury in some of its forms, often is followed by one or both of these diseases in their most formidable types. In such cases is the adage, "delays are dangerous," especially adapted.

VI. *Chewing Tobacco.* "It frequently happens that, in our daily lives, we become so perfectly familiarized with dangers, that we fail to heed them, and sometimes attribute the evils which result from them to other and far different causes. It is especially so with those vicious habits which enervate and destroy the functions of mind and body, and he who indulges in them, and has made them, as it were, familiar parts of himself, never regards them in their true, detestable light, while even minor faults with which he is not conversant seem to him formidable and worthy of abhorrence.

"Of these habits, are the excessive use of alcoholic drinks and tobacco in our own country, and of opium and other narcotics among other nations.

"Tobacco and some of its chemical products have invariably been included in the toxicologist's list of poisons since it was first introduced into Europe in 1560.

"This, together with alcohol, opium, and a few other narcotics, differ from other poisons in the almost irresistable desire, amounting to a species of mania, which they beget in their victims for a repetition of their effects, while, on the other hand, he who has once been poisoned by lead or sulphuric acid, will take special care to avoid a recurrence of the same, unless indeed he has the deliberate intention of committing suicide."

It is not our present design to discuss the subject of tobacco in a historical or chemical point of view, but merely to speak of a single one of its abuses which is probably more prevalent in this than any other country, and which, therefore, more especially deserves mention in this connection as one of the prevalent causes which contribute to the destruction of health and the shortening of life among our citizens.

The ignorant Laplander, and the rough, uncultivated seaman are no more abject slaves to its use than is the man whose educational refinement in all other respects entitle him to the appellation of gentleman, and the latter, while surrounded by every other luxury which wealth can procure, is made as miserable when deprived of its fascinating effects as the poor shipwrecked sailor upon a desert island without the common necessities of life. Even he whose natural tastes and early training have been of that high degree of nicety that he is over-scrupulous in preventing food or drinks from passing his lips which may be adulterated or contaminated with dirt, and who carefully abstains from touching anything which,

to his delicate senses, may appear unclean, often defiles his breath, stains his lips, and stupefies his brain by this famous poison.

So far as history informs us, the use of tobacco in Europe was for many years confined to smoking, snuffing being its next form, and chewing of comparatively recent date.

One of the amusing incidents connected with its early use in England for smoking purposes is illustrated on the backs of some of our national currency notes. The engraving represents Sir Walter Raleigh, one of its earliest advocates, in his appartment, and in company with some of his friends, in the act of smoking a pipe of the newly acquired luxury. At this moment a page enters, bearing refreshments, but he is so frightened at seeing smoke issuing from the mouth of his master that he drops the tray of refreshments, and rushes out of the room, giving the alarm of fire.

The habit of smoking and snuffing tobacco spread so rapidly throughout Europe, and had arrived at such a pitch in 1624, that Pope Urban excommunicated all who were detected taking snuff in the church, and in the Russian Empire in 1634, the penalty of having the nose cut off was executed against all smokers.

In certain parts of Switzerland in 1653, inn keepers were ordered to inform against all persons smoking in their houses, and when so detected, the culprits were severely punished. Even as late as 1719, the authorities of Strasbourg prohibited the cultivation of tobacco, under the apprehension that it would diminish the growth of grain. In other countries efforts have been made to prevent its cultivation, sale, and use, under the plea that it would soon exterminate the population.

In time however, all these ideas came to be considered as absurd, and during the last century and a half, although it has had its violent opponents, no great effort has been made, as in the case of alcoholic liquors, to suppress its sale or use by law.

Like many other poisons, it is recognized by the most reliable medical authorities as a valuable medicine in certain cases, although it is acknowledge by most authors that the remedy is dangerous, not only from the direct fatal effects which it may produce when used in some of its forms, but almost from the uncontrolable habit which its use generally induces.

When chewed, it impairs the appetite, and brings on torpor of the gastric nerves, and is no doubt the frequent cause of paralysis. In immoderate quantities, it gives rise to confusion of the head, vertigo, stupor, faintness, nausea, vomiting, and general debility of the nervous and circulating functions. If these quantities be increased, the symptoms of its action are, severe retching, with the most distressing and persistent nausea, very feeble pulse, coolness of the skin, fainting, convulsions, and eventually death.

These violent effects, when chewed for a long time, and in gradually increasing quantities, are, to a great degree, lost, as is true of all narcotic poisons, by deadening the sensibility, or the slow paralysing of the organs with which it comes in contact. This diminution of the sensibility to the action of poisons is called *paralysis venenata*, or palsy from poison.

Chewing more than smoking excites the glands which furnish the saliva, thus robbing the system of the latter substance, which should be reserved to moisten the food during mastication, and assist in its digestion. At the same time, its continued use in this form distorts and changes the muscles and expression of the face in a peculiar manner, which is produced by no other narcotic poison.

In a standard work on diseases of the eye, by Prof. MACKENZIE, it is stated that tobacco is a frequent cause of diminution and loss of sight, or *amaurosis*, and that one of the best proofs of tobacco being its cause is the great improvement in vision—sometimes complete restoration—which ensues on giving up the use of this poison.

What is called *narcotism of the heart* is also one of its effects, and has often been known to disappear on suspension of the practice. Another symptom is a dull pain behind the breast bone, rather tending to the left side, and sometimes interfering with sleep.

Many cases of *delirium tremens* are known to have occurred from tobacco, and we have also the highest medical authority for saying that it produces a predisposition to lasting insanity.

Chewing tobacco is frequently adulterated with other poisons to increase its pungency and narcotic effects. For the former are added, among other things, sulphate of copper, sulphate of iron, antimony, alum, corrosive sublimate, black hellebore, and other poisonous drugs, and for the latter, poppy leaves, and substances of a similar nature; while, to preserve its moisture and impart a sweet taste, molasses, licorice and glycerin are employed.

For the chemistry, botany and natural history of tobacco, another occasion will be taken for a lecture, but for the present we trust we have said enough to deter any one from learning the habit of chewing tobacco, and to induce those who have already formed it to make strenuous efforts to abandon it before too late.

In conclusion permit me to state, that I have gleaned these remarks from various records of my observations and practice during the past 25 years, and my principal motive for embodying them in the form of a lecture is one of pure humanity and philanthropy, and while I sincerely thank you for your kind attention during the last hour, I trust your visit here may result in practical benefit, both to yourselves and to those who may live after you.

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